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## A Study of Labor Conditions Among Negro Longshoremen in Houston, Texas

Elois Olivia Tatum

*Prairie View State College*

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## D E D I C A T I O N

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.....

Sincerely Dedicated To My Mother  
And Dad Whose Faith In My  
Ambitions Have Caused  
Me To Go Thus Far.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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The writer wishes to thank her advisor, Mr. S. E. Warren for his helpful guidance and critical evaluations. Words of appreciation also go to Mr. G. W. Buchanan, Dr. Charles Pemberton and Rev. and Mrs. F. W. Logan for their invaluable aid and advice.

E. O. T.



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A STUDY OF LABOR CONDITIONS AMONG NEGRO  
LONGSHOREMEN IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

PART I

INTRODUCTION

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A. Purpose of the Study

The study of the Negro Longshoreman in Houston is both a pioneer as well as a provocative study. It attempts to describe his conditions, educational background, wages, hours and job situations. It even delves into his community relationships and shows the part he plays in the general uplift or degradation of his community. Little has been done, obviously, in portraying the role of organized Negroes in general and practically no research has been carried out regarding Negro longshoremen in Houston. To meet the need for a thorough investigation of Negro longshoremen in Houston this study has been undertaken. The keen desire to investigate



and get direct contact with the Negro longshoremen in Houston led to the choice of this subject and induced the belief that in this section labor conditions will not improve unless more scientific studies are made.

It is my sincerest desire that the strong points and the weaknesses in labor organizations and policies revealed in this thesis may be seen, re-investigated and acted upon by those who may ably and conscientiously work them out.

#### B. Method and Materials Used in the Study

Before the study proper was carried out and even before the writer thought of a subject, her adviser pointed out the necessity of a study among Negroes working at the Houston dock. He also pointed out the benefits to be derived from such a study and designated definite as well as general steps to follow in the investigation.

The method of procedure was arranged before the study was actually carried out. Bulletins,

newspaper articles, text books and reference books devoted to problems and disputes of Longshoremen were used. Thus there was a desire to first get a general knowledge of conditions, then go from the general to the specific. This meant that I could well have consumed more time because much more material from many more persons was found during the brief time but not fully investigated.

Dr. Charles E. Pemberton, physician for the Longshoremen, not only allowed the writer to go through his files but contributed valuable information concerning many aspects of the Longshoremen. These particular aspects shall be pointed out later in this thesis.

Introductions to and conversations with members and officials of the various local organizations proved interesting and helpful but the most impressive contact was the visit to the Port Houston Grounds. At the time of the visit, the men were being paid for their work. The many interviews caused a strong desire to return and dig deeper into the



labor conditions of these people.

If it is found that any material is inaccurate, I beg that the reader recognize the traditional or mouth-to-mouth method of investigation relied upon to a great extent in this study. Since there were few available written records concerning the Negroes, most of the data given was given from memory and taken from everyday experiences which may or may not be exact. Thus the reliability of this study depends greatly upon reliability of filed materials of the few officials and the mouth-to-mouth materials offered by various longshoremen.



## PART II

### BACKGROUND

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#### A. General History of Port Houston

It is only fair that a history of the Port itself be given in order to show exactly where the Negro longshoremen fit in. According to the Port Houston Port Book<sup>1</sup>, the Port was begun on a small scale in 1837 by the Allen Brothers, who were attempting to seek a location on the banks of Buffalo Bayou for water transportation. In those days few vessels in use required more than ten or twelve feet for safe navigation. Therefore, the location for a city fifty miles inland on the northwest curve of the Gulf, seemed very desirable and time has demonstrated the wisdom of their choice.

It has been the desire of the forward looking citizens of Houston to provide a waterway deep enough for cargo ships to reach its doors. Finally,

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<sup>1</sup>  
May, 1937, pp. 13-16.

after many tedious efforts, a representative secured the approval of Congress on a project, March 3, 1899, for a channel twenty-five feet deep and one hundred to one hundred fifty feet wide.<sup>1</sup> Only enough funds were appropriated to dig a channel eighteen and a half feet deep which was deeper than necessary for barges and still not deep enough for ocean vessels.

Realizing that a full depth of twenty-five feet was necessary before ships could be induced to come to Houston, a Deepwater Committee went to Washington early in 1910 to discuss the project. After offering to pay one-half the cost if Congress would appropriate the remainder, this committee secured the agreement of Congress and Engineers estimated the cost of construction at \$2,500,000.00.<sup>2</sup>

The first unit, Wharf I, was completed in August, 1915 and to this wharf a shipload of coal from Norfolk was brought, crude oil from Tampica

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<sup>1</sup> Port Houston Port Book, May, 1937, pp. 12-14.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., May, 1937, p. 14.



bananas from Honduras and phosphate from Tampa. Thus began the mighty development of the present Port Houston which has, in the course of its development, been largely responsible for an increase of population from 138,276 in 1920 to 292,352 in 1930.

Among the various commodities handled here are oil, in crude and refined state, cotton, wheat, scrap iron, chemicals, molasses, fertilizer, machinery, canned goods and other foods. Each of these commodities, handled, prepared and loaded on the ships is so handled by Longshoremen (white and black) from a specific wharf designed for such.<sup>1</sup> These men who do all the manual labor have played a direct part in the development of Port Houston.

#### B. Role of Laboring Elements in the Development of Port Houston

The portion or element of labor we are most interested in now, however, is the Negro element,

<sup>1</sup>  
Port Houston Port Book, May, 1937, p. 14.



his entrance into Port work and reasons why he was admitted. Undoubtedly, it has been found out that the ratio of employment runs one to one, for 50% of the Longshoremen employed in Port Houston are<sup>1</sup> Negroes.

There are various classified workers who have different jobs at the Port. The Longshoremen, who have the most important job of loading and unloading the ships that come into Port, are both Colored and White. These two racial groups have the same duties and work on different ends of the same ships.

The policemen hired for Port duty are white and are placed there to settle any disputes arising; to guard the money when it is carried to and from banks and to guard the pay roll funds.

The pagers are important in that they are hired to call the men in to load ships when they

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<sup>1</sup>

Taken from notes given by Freeman Everett.

come before or after scheduled times. He must know where each of the men lives and be able to page him quickly. This 'pager' for colored longshoremen is colored and for whites is white.

The operators of the various business establishments found around the Port are not hired but allowed to operate with Port officials' permission. Their profits and success in operating depend absolutely on their ingenuity. It is interesting to note that the majority of these operators are women.

Upon entering one combination gambling house, cafe and hotel, I found various tables with men sitting around them deeply interested in "policy". Others sat silently by sipping their beer and observing.



### PART III

#### THE ADVENT OF NEGROES INTO PORT WORK

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##### A. Causes

Several sets of causes help explain the influx of Negroes into Port work. They may be classed as general and special causes.

Among the general causes explaining why the Negro was first introduced into Port work was the belief that Negroes were stronger physically than the whites and were therefore better able to handle the cargo. To follow up the lead of the Negro "Bronze" being the main reason for his work here, one Port official said, "Miss, the dumber a man is, the better. The white folk only want strength; they don't care about education".

Special reasons for the employment of Negroes may also seem conjectural, but some are borne out by facts. For example, Negroes long suited to hard

work and "gang" labor could be hired at lower wages than whites doing the same work. Aside from the element of mass or racial exploitation is the philanthropic and friendly motive. In response to it, ship owners befriended Negroes with jobs. Thus we find various elements entering into the hiring of Negro longshoremen.

The physician for longshoremen gave the three prerequisites for becoming a longshoreman; they are: (1) the Negro has to be within the age limits of twenty-one to forty-five years; (2) he must weigh approximately one hundred sixty-five pounds; and (3) he must pass a thorough physical examination. Thus any one who has a contagious disease, is weak or physically incapable in anyway is unacceptable.

To a questionnaire I sent Mr. Charles Crotty, Assistant Director of the Port, I received the following response:

"Replying to your card of April 24th sent to Houston Chamber of Commerce and referred to this office, I will say that the Negro has played a very important part in the development and operation of the Port of Houston during the past



twenty-five years, and even before it became a deep sea port"

co "Harking back to the early days when cotton was loaded on barges for movement from Houston to Galveston and the Gulf, the Negro labor was especially active in the handling of cotton from field to gin, to the town's local merchant, thence by wagon or rail to Houston into warehouse through the compress, then down chutes into barges, towed down the stream by tugs, loaded onto ships outside the Galveston Bar, later over ship side at Galveston wharves."

"The compresses, warehouses and terminals employ a large force of Negro labor, for it seems that no one can handle cotton better either in the boll, or the bale. Longshore work or the leading and unloading of cars, trucking, stocking, stowing of freight in vessels, handling slings of cargo, operating the cargo winches, etc. is a work in which the Negro seems to take a special delight, singing and crooning happily as he balances and gives it a start down the dock, then riding the handles for a hundred feet."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Grotty definitely states in the foregoing paragraphs that the Negro was admitted on his "bronze" and as a result of his efficiency in handling cargo, "Many of the steamship lines use Negro labor

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<sup>1</sup>  
May 3, 1938.

exclusively, and hundreds have been regularly employed for many years, have acquired good homes, automobiles, radios and all comforts and luxuries enjoyed by well-paid employees. He continued:

"Our steamship line reports that it has men who have been employed steadily for over twenty years and now keeps 280 on its pay rolls at cost of \$6,500.00 per week".<sup>1</sup>

"The many private industries along the ship channel, such as cement plants, oil refineries, fertilizer works, etc. employ many hundreds of men the year round and while no actual count has been made it is estimated that fully two thousand Negroes are gainfully and steadily employed in and around the port".<sup>2</sup>

Thus one may see that as a result of his introduction into Port work, the Negro has been able to work himself up to a level where he not only deserves good wages but is in a position to demand better wages and better working conditions. It is through labor organizations that he expresses his desires and demands.

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<sup>1</sup>  
May 3, 1938

<sup>2</sup>  
May 3, 1938



## PART IV

### DIVISIONS OF THE LONGSHOREMEN ORGANIZATIONS

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There are four divisions or organizations corresponding to the four branches of longshoremen services. These are: (1) Deep sea, (2) Coast-wise, (3) Warehouse and (4) Intercoastal divisions.

#### A. The Deep-Sea Division

The deep sea group is that group which cleans, loads and unloads ships coming in from foreign countries such as England, Italy, France, etc. The men who handle the deep-sea ships are restricted to handling these ships, and are never allowed to handle cargo coming in on coast-wise ships or the other divisions.\*

The men who do deep-sea loading and unloading have a wage scale of \$.90 to \$.95 per hour and \$1.20 per hour for extra time. (This extra time

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\*Information given by Freeman Everett, President of Local 872.

includes any unexpected calls that may come from ships not scheduled to land. It might be interesting to note that the Negroes do 70% of this particular type of work. There are 345 men who do this work and they are divided into "gangs" each having an average of fifteen men to the gang. These "gangs" work on shifts; this plan usually allows one man to work on the average of two weeks each month.

#### B. Coast-Wise Divisions

The coast-wise division restricts the men to work on the ships that come in and go out from the points in the United States. The men who load and unload these ships have a wage scale of \$.70 to \$.80<sup>1</sup> per hour; and \$1.00 per hour for over-time. There are approximately 500 men who belong to this division and they, too, are worked on "gangs", shifting in order to permit men to get in at least two weeks of work per month. The coast-wise division, as has

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<sup>1</sup> Information given by W. Issacs, President of Local 1471



probably been noticed, has a lower wage scale than the deep-sea and the officials questioned accounted for this variation by stating that the inter-coastal and coast-wise men work oftener than the Deep-Sea and their work is not as hard. Therefore, they get less per hour.

### C. The Inter-Coastal Division

The inter-coastal men have a wage scale almost identical with the coast-wise workers in that they get \$.70 to \$.85 per hour for regular work and \$1.20 for over-time.

These men handle ships that touch the Panama Isles and places similarly located. They have a membership of about 250 men and they are divided into gangs of from twenty to thirty men to the gang. All men are hired and fired by the organization and each man belonging is a union man.

It might be fitting to state here that the only characteristic of the different divisions is their name on the roll book of a particular foreman.

If a foreman of the inter-coastal division finds that a Deep-Sea man has deliberately worked in his division he may rightfully refuse to pay him his wages.

#### D. Warehouse Division

The warehouse crew takes care of the storage of commodities in the various warehouses on the wharves. When Longshoremen of the Deep-Sea, Intercoastal, or Coast-wise divisions unload ships, it is the duty of the warehouse crew to store these commodities immediately. The responsibility of putting every commodity in its correct place rests upon their shoulders. In this crew there is a proportion, 60 Negroes and 40 whites. Both of these groups receive from \$.65 to \$.85 per hour for regular work and \$1.00 for over time.

The lifting of heavy bales of cotton and other heavy commodities for weighing before storage is believed to be better done by Negroes than whites.



This accounts for the larger percentage of Negroes doing Warehouse service than whites.

Thus we may see that the dividing of the men into organizations tends to make them more efficient in one particular field. This specialization, linked with efficiency, usually leads to job maintenance with any people.

PART V  
ORGANIZATION OF VARIOUS LOCALS

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A. Classification

To promote cooperation among themselves and to provide for the sick and dead members of divisions, the Longshoremen further sub-divided themselves into "Local" organizations that confine them to Houston Longshoremen only. The divisions mentioned above are generalized to the extent that Longshoremen over the United States are classified in that manner; in the Houston Ports these divisions are still further divided. Each "local" president readily furnished information concerning the organization, wage scale, and labor conditions of his members.

Before discussing the local unions, I deem it wise to discuss the two major Labor unions; namely, the (1) International Longshoremen Association and (2) The Independent Association.



## 1. The Independents<sup>1</sup>

Growing out of disagreement with the policies and regulations of the I.L.A. the Independent organization was formed. These Independents embrace 700 of the 2,000 Negroes employed in Port Houston and their union is distinctly separate from the I.L.A. in all respects. They are basically "on their own", settling their own disputes without consulting any "outside" labor authorities. Since their organization is separate and apart they are not confined to any international rules and regulations. At present it is respected and recognized even though its members do not enjoy the privileges that the I.L.A. members enjoy.

## 2. The International Longshoremen Association

The I.L.A., however, has the greater number of Longshoremen and it is believed that this association offers the greatest protection and recognition.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the files of the Longshoremen physician.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from a brief history of "I.L.A. by N. Jones, organizer for the I.L.A.

It may be pertinent to mention here that any mention of connections with the A.F. of L. will immediately place a researcher in a bad position with the Longshoremen.<sup>1</sup>

The first admission of the Negro in Houston to the I.L.A. was in 1914 when a small band of Negro Longshoremen asked for permission to enter in the national organization, which membership would supposedly afford better working conditions and better pay to them. Previously, the Southern Negro was deprived of all national and international privileges of sharing contracts pertaining to better working conditions. After much deliberation the I.L.A. opened its doors and permitted Negro entrance and participation in Port Houston, 1914. Questioning of Negro Longshoremen proved that the majority of these consider this union a fair one that gives equal rights to all races that sit in on its conferences. These conferences are held monthly in order that grievances may be presented to the I.L.A.

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<sup>1</sup>Members of I.L.A. expressed feelings of antagonism for A.F. of L. policies and they are suspicious of any person who attempts to interest the men in A.F. of L.



authorities, discussed and some desirable end may be attained peacefully, thus eliminating the necessity for strikes.

1  
One of the Negro officials at the Port, when asked his opinion of the I.L.A. responded, "I know of no other concern that gives to the Negro such equal privileges and rights as the I.L.A."

Wm. Jones, Negro organizer for this particular organization, pointed out to me three specific things that the I.L.A. has done for organized workers in Houston.

First, it has done more than any other known organization to bring a closer relationship between the races. This is evident in that the conferences held each month make the Negro and white races known to each other and better understood.

Second, it affords Negroes a chance to sit in conference and make demands for some things that they are justly entitled to that otherwise they would not get. For example, the I.L.A.'s monthly

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Wm. Jones, or ganizer for I.L.A.

meetings that have been mentioned before are for both white and colored grievances and the month previous to my visit the conference had centered around wage scales and infrequent working schedules.

Third, by affiliation with the I.L.A. the organized Negro Longshoremen have been able to aid the other bodies of laborers in organizing and affiliating. As an example, Local 872, the oldest organized group in Houston Port, aided each of the other locals in organizing and joining the I.L.A.

## B. Activities of the Local Union

### 1. Officers and Membership

These two sets of organized workers are engaged in many activities, some organizational and occupational, and others social, fraternal, business and even civic. To understand them, one must see the "locals" in terms of their officers and members, their characters and rules, and their manifold duties and services.



The locals I shall discuss are represented by numbers rather than by names. They are (1) Local 872; (2) Local 1345; and (3) Local 1271. In each of these locals one finds a different set of officers, different rules as to entrance fees and burial fees and a different scale of benefits in case of accidents.

The various locals spring from the necessity of dividing the large number of Longshoremen into smaller units in order that they may work more effectively in every way. Each of these groups reports that there is a continual struggle to give out information to newcomers that will enable them to regulate themselves and adjust themselves to Port work as well as adjust the Port work to them.

Of Local 872, the oldest organized group in Port Houston, Mr. Freeman Everett is President. To assist him in every way is a willing cabinet whose names I did not secure. Mr. Everett reports a total membership of 345 Longshoremen. This group

is affiliated with the white Local 896 with which group it works on the same ships. It was clearly understood, however, that these two racial groups do not work together; merely on the same ships but at different ends.

Upon entering 872, each member is required to pay an entrance fee of \$101.00 (one hundred and one dollars) each and this entitles him to a membership card with all privileges as long as he lives in Houston. Furthermore each member contributes a small amount (the exact amount the writer was unable to secure) to the union which goes to protect him during illness and provides a death benefit of \$1,000.00. It is quite noticeable that death benefits are stressed in each local but this is accountable because there are a number of accidents and fatalities occurring on the wharves and protection is essential. When a member pays his fees, he remains a member unless he leaves Houston; and a member residing in Houston, though his illness will not allow him to work, will always get insurance benefit.

Local 1345, which has at its head Mr. U.S. Morris,



has control of the steamers that touch all American ports and handles all cargo between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. In this group all men are hired by the organization and fired by it. The foreman, who is a Negro, evaluates the workers hired.

Local 1471 has as its President Mr. C. Isaacs. This organization is another Coast-wise division which has 167 members and whose scale of pay ranges from \$.85 to \$1.20 per hour. Besides the President, who is paid on a regular weekly basis, there is a Business Agent who is paid likewise. This is unusual for none of the men, with the exception of these two, is paid on a weekly basis. For this particular difference the group has special recognition.

\* Since I have discussed the three most important "Locals" as to officers and membership, I shall now list and characterize their activities, organizational and otherwise. The general functions of the locals are to bring about closer fraternal feelings between

members, to secure better wages and working conditions, to better the laboring element of the Negro in general by organization and affiliation with those agencies that offer promotion and achievement.

Various activities of the "locals" include collective bargaining for wages and hours, business, sick benefits, social and cultural activities, and civic participation.

In Local 1345 there are a sicklist chairman, a walking delegate, and a loan department. Each of these plays an important part in the general functioning of the organization. The sick list chairman is ever active in seeing that each member of local 1345 is amply taken care of when he is ill and he provides for a "striker"<sup>1</sup> to work in this man's place.

The "walking delegate" is a mediator who carries grievances to the steamship heads. This man is used to peacefully negotiate for the men in case there is trouble resulting from some misconduct of

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A "striker" is a worker of the same organization substituting for another and receiving half his wages.



the steamship heads or officials working for them. Any grievance, no matter how seemingly insignificant, if reported to him, is supposed to be promptly relayed to Port officials and investigated.

✓ One of the most spectacular things about this particular organization, however, is the Loan Company. The men finance it, and direct it themselves. It is strictly a "Negro business" and any application for pecuniary aid is carried to this Negro Loan Company.

Aside from these activities, the Longshoremen have organized bands, quartets and clubs that give them recognition through out Houston. During the Centennial in Dallas, 1936, the Longshoremen's band of Houston made a creditable showing during Negro day. Not only do the organizations aid in cultural fields but in community activities also. The Y.W.C.A. and the Y.M.C.A. have received pecuniary aid from them as well as needy families during Yuletide seasons.

### C. Relation Between the "Locals" and Other Nearby Agencies

This picture of specific locals and their officers and members, charters and bylaws, functions and activities, is not complete unless viewed in relation to other agencies in the community - and especially those near the wharves or buildings used by organizations.

The "headquarters" are buildings that the men frequent most and are located approximately three blocks from the main wharf. Each of the buildings is shabby and poorly equipped - evidence of the many rough men who use them. Among these buildings are "hang-outs" or resting places, cafeterias, gambling shacks, hotels, liquor shops, cheap dry good stores and houses of prostitution. These surrounding establishments are reputed to take much of the pay checks on pay day for these men, upon questioning, were found to have a few possessions, other than automobiles. Most of them stayed in boarding houses or hotels and were not investing any money in homes. The most profitable of establishments found here were the liquor stores and prostitution houses, that



is, if one might judge by the inflow of men to these establishments.

During the particular visit made by the writer, the occasion was "pay day" and one could hardly enter the grounds for cars - which held the wives and sweethearts of the men waiting for them and their pay checks. Around the door to each shack was a beggar who sang loudly to attract attention as the men filed out.

"Mista Bob", the policeman who gets \$3.00 per afternoon, was stationed at each pay off shack to see that no disturbances arose and to quiet any disturbances that might arise.

The quarters around the port are typically Negroid. They are for the most part in desperate need of repair and in need of sanitary improvements. The sleeping quarters are filthy and sadly in need of screening and renovating; the gambling dens are dirty, poorly ventilated, and the air is thick with odors of smoke and cheap liquors. Little care is taken of the grounds surrounding the Negro establishments and the Longshoremen have nothing with which they can point with pride to here.

## PART VI

SUMMARY AND APPRAISAL

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## A. Summary

The points that I have presented in this treatise on conditions of Negro Longshoremen in Houston, Texas are varied and quite incomplete; nevertheless I have, in a pioneer way, presented several matters of importance in the conditions of Negro longshoremene in Houston. Limited time, lack of previous studies, unavailability of more complete records and the sex of the writer help explain the indefiniteness and incompleteness of the thesis in many places.

The matters of importance pointed out to you, however, may be briefly summarized.

First, I pointed the background for the study by tracing the development of Port Houston from a fishing wharf before 1914 to a world harbor receiving ocean-going vessels, and by showing the role of certain laboring elements in this development.

Secondly, I depicted the advent of Negroes into Port Houston. They seemed favored for employment because of traditional and prejudicial beliefs as to



superior physical strength, lower mentality and general adaptability to "gang" work under driving foremen or singing pace-setters. I also indicated the policy of "divide and rule" which meant the employment of both whites and Negroes and even sanctioned labor unions among them both of the mixed and separate type, the international and the local type.

Thirdly, I described the four types of services performed by longshoremen; namely (1) Deep-Sea, (2) Intercoastal, (3) Coastwise, (4) Warehouse, and indicated the organizations of Longshoremen corresponded so that specific "locals" furnished exclusively the workers for a particular type of activity.

### B. Appraisal

From the discussion and summary, certain facts stand out. I shall attempt to list these below.

First, the Negro Longshoremen have an organization that is well worth study and analysis.

Second, the Negro Longshoremen possess a culture definitely their own which centers around a particular "Port" culture pattern.

Third, the Union and the Negro are linked inseparably in some particular occupations and the variety of wage scales in accordance with types of

work is interesting.

Before any event can well be understood it is logical that the narrator tell how and why the event began. Herein lies the reason for a portion of this paper being devoted to the advent of the Negro into Port work. It was found that because the Negro has always had a reputation for strength, he was used in this particular work which requires strength. The result is that now most of the port organizations use fifty per cent Negroes where as some of the private organizations use Negroes exclusively.<sup>1</sup>

In order to amply handle all labor problems and settle disputes amicably the Longshoremen are separated into five different divisions, namely, Deep-Sea, Coastwise, Intercoastal and Warehouse. These divisions make it possible for Longshoremen to daily from one division to the other but requires a thorough knowledge of the methods and techniques used in his particular division, and restricts him to that division.

These "locals", as they are called, are encircled by two important unions called Independents

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<sup>1</sup>  
Taken from a letter received from Chas. Crotty,  
Assistant Port Director, May 3, 1938



and the International Longshoremen's Association. The Independents hold the membership of 700 of the 2000 workers and the I.L.A. holds the rest. The scale of pay in each union is different.

The labor conditions under which these men work are of such nature that a trip to the grounds would make them most impressive to the average person. They are surrounded by vice unsanitary establishments and the regular set-up is one tending toward degradation.

As a result of this very interesting study, the writer has concluded that the salary which the average Longshoreman would have you think he receives is a fictitious one. His hourly pay is fair enough yet he does not work enough hours per month to make his salary constant. His shift only allows him to work about two weeks monthly, the pay for which does not amount to much in the final check up.

The Negro is proving efficient and desirable in this work, however, and is steadily gaining employment percentage on the whites. If he gains in the next twenty-five years as he has in the last 25 years, it seems highly probable that he may rate 75% on the employment scale.

It would be unfair to these men if this paper were closed without mentioning the unusual coopera-

tiveness among them and the manner in which they operate their own locals, hire and fire their own men, pay them and settle their own disputes. It is a thing to praise in any group, white or black, and in this type of worker especially.

In concluding this thesis, I must admit the pleasure derived from the investigation and the privilege granted to talk with and interview men and inspect their grounds and establishments. Although this treatise is by no means thorough and all-inclusive, it is my honest desire that some better prepared investigator may dig deeper into this pioneer field and study the wage scale and working hours, comparing them and offering some suggestions for improvement; that he may study, the "locals" and see if any of the "wrinkles" in them may be ironed out and help them do so ; that he may study the agencies to find out if they can be cleaned out and made wholesome and inviting places instead of degrading and repulsive; for only when studies are made and remedies offered which may be used effectively are these studies beneficial to the writer and society.



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2. Interviews

3. Leaflets.



ILLUSTRATIONS

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PORT HOUSTON IN PICTURES



TURNING BASIN . . . HOUSTON'S WORLD FAMOUS PORT



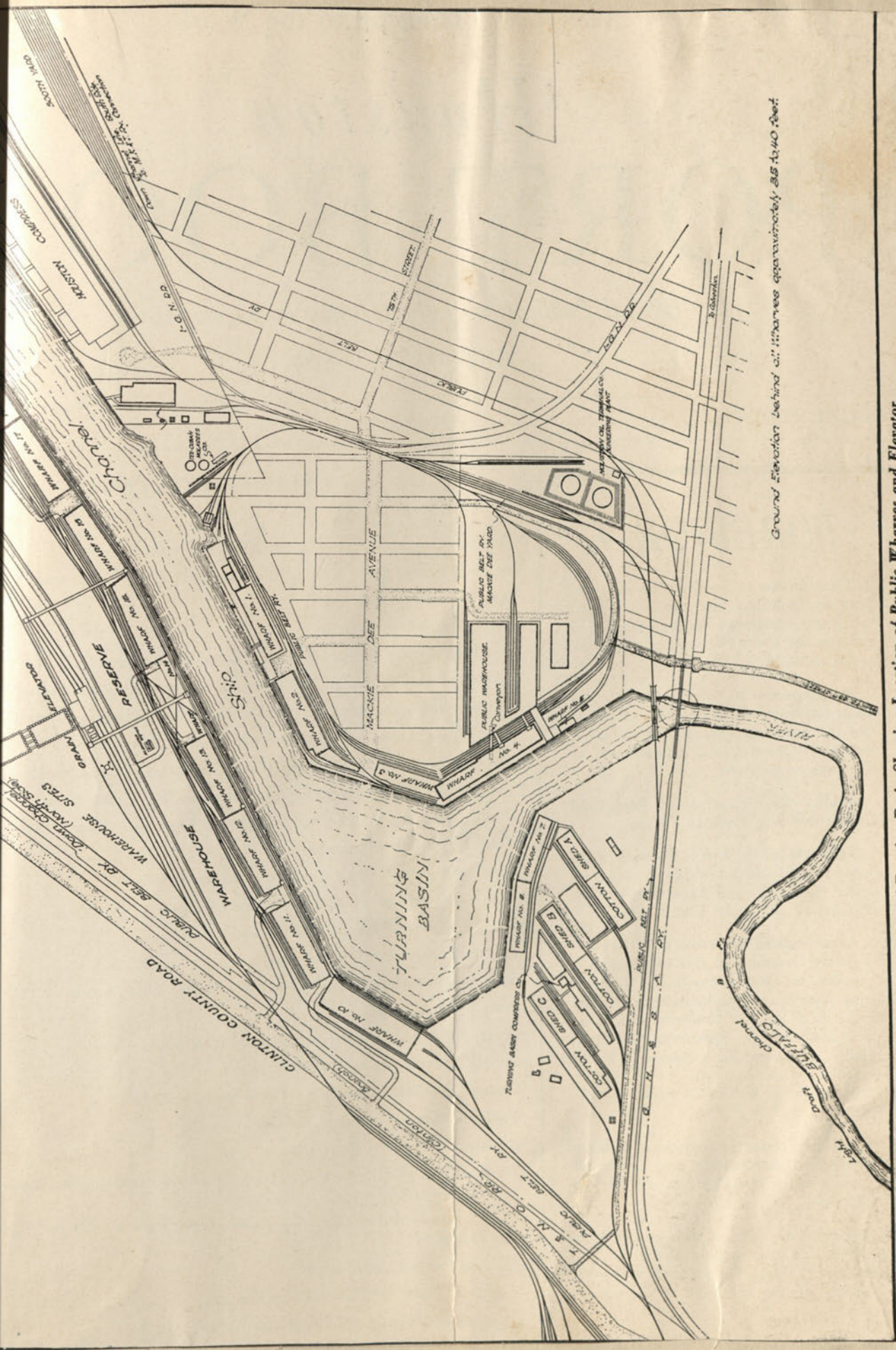


MAP OF TURNING BASIN SHOWING LOCATION OF  
PUBLIC WHARVES AND ELEVATOR









Ground Elevation behind all wharves approximately 85 to 90 feet

Map of Turning Basin Shoring Location of Public Wharves and Elevator



A LETTER CERTIFYING ONE OF THE  
ACTIVITIES OF THE LONGSHOREMEN



INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS  
OF  
HOUSTON, TEXAS

To Whom It May Concern;

Greetings:

The International Longshoremen's Associations of Houston have accepted an invitation from the General Manager of the Negro Advisory Committee of the Texas Centennial at Dallas, Texas to present the International Longshoremen's Silver-tone Band in Concert in the Amphitheatre of the Hall of Negro Life on the second Negro Day Wednesday afternoon, August 19, 1936 from 4 to 5 P.M.

In accepting this invitation the officers and members of the International Longshoremen's Associations of Houston felt that it was a wonderful opportunity for these organizations to sponsor their band in this effort, and as many officers and members as well as friends follow the band to Dallas and spend the day in telling all Texas and the world in music song, demonstrations and publicity what part these organizations are playing in the development of Port Houston and South Texas.

We also hope to carry with us publicity from the city of Houston, Harris County, the Chamber of Commerce, the Port Commission, our Public Schools and College, and other religious, fraternal, social, and civic organizations, institutions and agencies of the city of Houston and Harris County.

We also hope to have leaders of our organizations, its members, relatives and friends as well as other leaders of every worthwhile agency in the community in which we live on this train to Dallas.

In concluding this prospectus it is the plan of our committee to seek the indorsement and financial aid of our effort from the city of Houston, County of Harris, Chamber of Commerce, Port Commission, Steamship Lines, Agents, Stevedores, The Banks, and Merchants and Business men of the City of Houston and other organizations, institutions, agencies and individuals contributing toward the growth and development of the city of Houston, the Port of Houston and South Texas.

The Committee.

.....Chairman  
.....Secretary  
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(A duplicate copy of the original)